

REMARKS

The Applicants request reconsideration of the rejection.

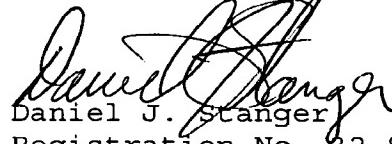
Claims 2, 8-9, and 12 are now pending.

The Examiner objected to the drawings due to an informality in Figure 3, as set forth on page 2 of the Office Action. A replacement sheet correcting the informality in Figure 3 accompanies this Reply, under cover of a Transmittal of Replacement Sheet of Formal Drawing.

Claims 1, 3-4, 6-7, and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Hojo, U.S. 6,744,762. Claims 5 and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Hojo in view of Murai, U.S. 6,775,279. In order to expedite the allowance of claims 2, 8-9, and 12, the Applicants have canceled Claims 1, 3-7, and 10-11, and rewritten Claims 2, 8-9, and 12 in independent form. Thus, the rejection has been rendered moot.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the Applicants request reconsideration of the rejection and allowance of the claims.

Respectfully submitted,


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Date: November 29, 2004